1: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1938 AV7 Burusho AV7

sufficiently severe. Happily winter is short, two or three months at most, and for the rest of the year day and night are spent mainly out of doors.

The social culture of the Burusho of Hunza is as high as their material culture is primitive. Three centuries of Islam—they are now Ismaili heretics, having been Shiahs until three or four generations ago—have not induced them to veil or despise their indomitable women, nor to abandon the wholesome tradition of exogamy between their different clans in favour of first-cousin marriage. They are freer from superstition and fanaticism than any people east or west of whom I have heard or read. Whatever be the esoteric teaching of the Ismailis of which Professor Ivanov might tell, it concerns the Hunza peasant as little as the homoousian controversy disturbs the mind of the British schoolboy. He goes his way in cheerful confidence that hard work, fair dealing, kindly affection and generosity must be as well pleasing to God the Merciful, the Compassionate, as ritual prayer or ceremonial fast, and his dreams are not broken by over-anxious fear of Hell or hope of Heaven.

The fastidiousness and personal cleanliness of the Hunza peasant are remarkable. Close packed amongst the crowd at festivals or sitting on the threshing floor amongst the workers, or entertained in their hospitable houses, we were never distressed by human exhalations or molested by parasites. The drinking water is guarded with scrupulous care from pollution by man or beast. Men and women, cooperate without embarrassment or restraint and no work is taboo for either sex, though for obvious reasons the heavier jobs of wall-building, irrigation and ploughing fall more naturally to the man, and the care of infants to the woman. But as soon as the father is allowed to handle his child, he will carry the baby proudly and tenderly out for its first airings, while boys and girls alike play with and watch over the toddlers.

Again and again, in face of the high morality and unquenchable spirit of the Hunzukuts, we were ashamed to think of what in our vaunted civilization ' man has made of man '.

SETTLING IN

123 609 771 It was at once clear that there was not going to be any initial hostility or distrust to overcome, even amongst the women. This is rather remarkable when you think that not one of them has ever been more than five or six miles away from her home village, and that they have never seen a white woman at close quarters before. They are a fine, healthy, good-looking crowd, and always appear cheery and good-tempered. Undoubtedly the short-cut to the women's hearts was to make much of their youngsters. In a superstitious place this would be dangerous; they would be terrified of the Evil Eye; but we noted with thankfulness that these entirely non-Oriental people were as free from inhibiting superstitions as we ourselves. This promised to make our work immensely easier.

2: Lorimer T-S (1927-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

bonfires recklessly consuming grass-cuttings and leaves that would be worth gold in Nímo's home.

Burushaski is an amazingly rich language, but it has evolved no word for "litter-lout." Go where you will in lane or courtyard, over field or bare hillside, you will not see an eggshell or a fleck of wool or a nutshell lying about. Hunza must be, bar none, the cleanest and the tidiest spot on earth. If a child is lucky enough to be given a few apricot stones he will crack them on a rock, eat the kernels with gusto, and gather up the shells for mother's fire. Only in a couple of the narrow lanes of the deserted fort did we stumble on a cast-away rag or two. When a homespun cloak has served father for three years' hard work, it will descend to a son, or be handed on to an orphan relation; when it is torn and tattered past repair it is carefully plucked to pieces, washed, beaten, and re-spun to make a girl's cloak, for her work is less strenuous than the boy's, and the re-spun cloak is stout enough for her and quite as warm.

Whatever the theoretical tenets of the Maulai (Ismaili) dissenters may be—and of these Professor Ivanow can best speak—the simple Hunzukuts has evolved for himself quite the most practical and admirable modification of Islam that I have ever seen or heard of. He does not veil his womenfolk nor banish them to separate quarters, but treats them as equal partners in field and home. His standard of morals is so high that when a young husband goes abroad, he trusts his young wife to the care of his father and brothers without misgiving. We heard no case of such a trust being abused. He retains his own custom of exogamic marriage between the clans and the normal first-cousin marriage of Islam (though recognized as religiously allowable and occasionally practised by the upper families) savours to the ordinary peasant of incest, and is in fact avoided, though not in principle taboo; he also, as we have noted, preserves his own fastidious and wholesome ideas about sanitation, and keeps his running water scrupulously pure. No archbishops or bishops (whom he would term *pirs*), and no professional priests or *mullas* reside in his territories, for which no doubt he has to thank some tacit concordat between his wise ruler and His Highness the Agha Khan, the spiritual head of the Ismailis.

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

spiritual head of the Ismailis. A few of the peasant farmers have learned to read—as some have learned to carpenter—and they have copied out such essential passages of their sacred Persian books as enable them to preside with due solemnity at a name-giving, a burial, or a betrothal. The Mir appoints a sufficient number of these modestly literate men to be khalifas, and lend a dignity to such ceremonies. When you need their services you send for one—as we send for the plumber when our pipes have burst. He performs his duty, shares with honour in the ensuing family feasting, accepts some small gift in kind according to the family's resources, and goes his way to resume his normal work in his own fields.

We knew Afiato of No. 6, for three months or more, as an obliging neighbour and father of a large batch of our child friends; we admired his skill in ploughing and threshing, and the hard work he had put into levelling an intractable patch of hill within a stone's throw of our house and converting it into a vegetable garden before we realized that he was a khalifa or lay-priest. There was nothing in dress or manner to distinguish him from his fellows; he offered no unsought advice and censored no one's morals but his own. If Hunza is, as I believe, the tidiest corner of God's earth, it is also the least priest-ridden, and the absence of fanaticism and superstition is as remarkable and refreshing as the absence of litter. There is an atmosphere of mental independence that makes the air of Hunza spiritually bracing.

What the pre-Islamic cults of Hunza were—and traces of them are slight though DL may have some conjectures to offer about them later—the Hunzukuts of to-day are extraordinarily enlightened.[1] Their folk-lore (very probably borrowed) may tell of apparitions and miracles, but they look for no marvels in their life of everyday, they see no ghosts and fear no Evil Eye. They indulge in no gymnastic prayers, they keep no Fast of Ramazan, they travel on no Hajj. I saw only one man turn Mecca-wards to pray, and that was our Kashmiri

[1] In astounding contrast to their magic- and witch-ridden Shin neighbours in Gilgit (V. *J.R.A.S.*, July, 1929, *The Supernatural in the Folklore of the Gilgit Region*).

771 sweeper; I heard only one muezzin sound the Call to Prayer—
788 and saw no one pay heed to it. He was chanting from a cliff in the Mir's garden, and the Mir gathers round him craftsmen of
778 every sort. There are a few shrines in the country reputed
796 holy—including two burial places of Moses within a few
788 hundred yards of each other on one mountain side—where a few rags on sticks flutter unconvincingly in the wind; and one, the shrine of Baba Ghundi in Chupursan, some seven days' march above Báltít, is the object of an occasional pilgrimage. On Tuesdays and Fridays there are said to be services in the House of Assembly, which has supplanted the older Shiah mosque, but I never observed one of our servants or neighbours absent himself from work to go to them.

771 Yet the people are by no means without faith. It is difficult
181 to know exactly what even church-going Christians of our own
775 country effectively believe—it is impossible to be sure what one effectively believes oneself—so I can offer only a tentative guess as to the average person's simple credo. The Hunzukuts hold, I think, a comforting, unquestioning faith in a good and kindly God, whose ways they cannot profess to understand. They meet bereavement with a murmur that "there is no remedy against the will of God"; they bury their loved ones with genuine sorrow, but without anxiety. They feel that "it is well with the child," and vaguely trust that some day, somewhere, somehow, they will meet again. They assume as axiomatic that God asks of them diligence and truth, fair-dealing and goodwill. They are hard-working and thrifty, tolerant to others; kind and affectionate in the home, gentle to children and the aged; generous beyond their means to the orphan; truthful and just; and they go about their daily work in the happy confidence that God is well pleased. If they din no perfunctory prayers into His ears, there are occasions when they heartily and humbly pray, as will presently be seen.

771 The Hunzukuts is no mystic, no poet, no artist. This life
181 claims his full attention if he is to live at all; philosophic speculation about "fixed fate, freewill, fore-knowledge absolute" does not line his brow or disturb his rest, nor does he "keep in duty through the toilsome day, because of praise

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

or blame that comes at night." I may be misinterpreting his attitude of mind. These are not subjects you can thresh out as easily as the wheat, and neither his vocabulary nor mine would have sufficed to tackle them. But this I can vouch for, that every face you see looks restfully content, breaks readily into a happy smile; that there are in Hunza no nervous gestures and no haunted eyes, and in normal life no irritable words. There is little amiss with a faith which spells happiness and high-principled living without debasing fear of Hell or over-conscious hope of Heaven.

When the final crops of every kind are safely in, the first duty of the paterfamilias is to take stock of the year's yield. So much is set aside for seed-grain, and not the direst shortage will tempt him to violate the sanctity of this; so much is set aside for rent (if he is a tenant) or for the tax due on any craft he pursues—the miller pays a very small tax on his mill, the weaver on his loom-pit, the khalifa on his learning; and all pay (alas!) a sum as "Peter's pence" to their spiritual head, the Agha Khan. Next he calculates the "emergency reserve" that may be needed for hospitality or charity during the coming year; this also is scrupulously put aside unground. On the rest he and his family must live till next harvest, under the careful rationing of the senior housewife, the importance of whose rôle I have already stressed.

The period of comparative—well-earned and welcome—rest that ensues, is inaugurated by a solemn watch-night service of prayer and thanksgiving in the House of Assembly. One of our main difficulties in the early days was to get due notice of such events beforehand. Our people were slow to realize that the normal routine of their affairs could really interest us. The first news we had of this Harvest Thanksgiving Service was one late evening in October when Dádo casually said as he bade us good-night: "I'm off now to the all-night prayer." In answer to our questions he told us that the Assembly Hall and the women's annex would be packed with the entire population, and that the khalifas in rotation would keep up all night a reading of the sacred Persian books and of the Qur'an. "And shall you be able to understand all that they read?" "Oh no,

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

find much more of it, and David had hoped to get some interesting notes on the bi-lingualism of children whose parents were of different stocks, but we came across no household among the Burusho we met where the wife was a foreigner.

Social intercourse with Nagir is virtually non-existent. The Hunza menfolk occasionally cross the river to barter Hunza wool for Nagir grain, for the former is much valued, though why, with far more extensive pasturage, the Nagir sheep should yield inferior wool was a mystery we never solved. But though a common language might appear to unite the two people, a difference of religion sunders them, and profoundly different social customs. Centuries of rivalry have left strong, latent feelings of hostility and distrust, probably reinforced—though this is a point on which possibly neither side has consciously reflected—by a difference of race. The Nagir women enjoy no such freedom and equality as the Hunza women do. They still wear unbecoming, dark homespun bonnets concealing all their hair while in Aliábád only one such bonnet had survived the comparatively recent coming of the merry cotton cap. Nagir sheep are predominantly dark brown, and in consequence Nagir caps and *chogas* are of a sombre hue that fittingly symbolizes the less genial temperament. Their Shi'ah mosques are called "Houses of Mourning" (*ma'tim sera*), and their interpretation of Islam seems to be as cheerless as would be a form of Christianity that concentrated all its devotion on the sorrows of Good Friday, and spared no thought for the rejoicings of Easter and Christmas. Now it happens that the Arabic word for mourning (*ma'tim*) sounds very similar to the Burushaski *matum* (black). As we rode through Nagir and noted the dour looks of the Nagirkuts, the crouching, face-averted women, the absence of spontaneous "good days" which brighten every Hunza chance encounter, the fact that when a Nagir prince was riding with us his passage was unmarked by any welcome or salute, our Hunza men would murmur with a grim satisfaction: "Their caps are black, and their cloaks are black, and their mosques are black, and by Allah their hearts are black!" All travellers who have passed through the two adjacent states have noted the relative gloom of Nagir, and some

WINTER AND THE "GREAT COLD"

miles daily to Báltít, as Yaman and a couple of our other young friends did, and attend the Government-supported school with the sons and grandsons of the Mir and the Wazir. Promising children of the more well-to-do can attend a more advanced school at Gilgit, and the really studious may even make their way down to Srinagar.

Ninety-nine per cent of the population, however, happily still remain illiterate, and have not fallen victims to compulsory education. When the people would question me about conditions in England, they were horrified to learn of such things as rates and income-tax, but even more aghast at the tyranny that compels both boys and girls to spend the years from five to fourteen at school. "But that's the time when they ought to be *learning things*," they said.

When my pleasant evening "By the Lamp" was ended and I had said good-bye, cautiously descended the ladder and mounted my waiting horse, I was shocked to see my host accompanying us carrying a tray of food. I had expressly stipulated that I would only accept his kind invitation on condition of not being laden with food gifts to take home. To my protests Kalbi said: "Yes, yes, Mother dear, it's all right. I'm not forgetting. I'm only taking up his supper to the sweeper."

With honourable simplicity the Hunzukuts abide by the fundamentals of Islam as they understand them. They may not be strong on ostentatious prayer and fasting, they rack their brains over no theological subtleties, but a Believer is a man and a brother, be he a Kashmiri, be he twenty times a sweeper. Here was a man of substance, a Levy, a grandfather, a much respected citizen in his small community, climbing a mile uphill to carry with his own hands a share of the evening's feast to his absentee guest. That the man was absent was no doubt a tactful concession to any caste-prejudice with which India might have infected me.

The boys lighten the monotony of the indoor weeks of the Great Cold by occasionally dashing out for a hasty game of foot polo or tipcat with their friends or keeping themselves warm with *mindak* matches. Such young men as are real dance

175 643 was then succeeded by his son, the present ruler—Mohammed Jamal Khan who has been the ruler of Hunza since 1945.

175 643 669 Here is a quotation from the Mir's grandfather's book in which he tells about the blood-curdling exploits of his brother, Sfdar Ali, whom he succeeded:

"He thereupon had Taighoon, Nematulla and Misiab killed, Sakhawat Shah and Jahandar Shah rolled down a precipice below Ghulkin, their mother put to death and arranged for the murder of Salam Khan in Shimshal."

However, he spared the life of his brother, Nazim Khan and then he wrote to the Maharajah of Kashmir to announce his ascension to the throne in the following descriptive terms:

"By the will of Allah and a decree of fate, my late father and I recently fell out. I took the initiative and settled the matter, and have placed myself on the throne of my ancestors."

This bloodthirsty Mir virtually got away with mass murder and felt that he was cock of the walk and could afford to defy any power.

175 648 From my reading of the Mir's grandfather's autobiography, from studies made from the earlier books written about Hunza and from my observations and discussions on the spot, I have evolved a personal kind of understanding concerning the situation that prevails in Hunza today.

[771] The Mir of Hunza, as well as the other rulers of the principalities in that area, such as Nagir, Punial, Yasin, Baltistan and others, are all Mohammedan and, from what I can gather, they supported or were willing participants in the revolt which tied them together with the central government in Pakistan. This government, bear in mind, is strictly Mohammedan and partition

evening meal, watch TV and then to bed.

While this may all sound very good and very logical and fit into what we believe is a pattern, the average day is really unlike what I have described here for either the city dweller or the farmer. The truth of the matter is that, as I said at the start, no two days are entirely alike.

The day of the week plays an important role. The weather contributes its variation. Then we all know full well that not even a minute is predictable. So how could anyone expect to give a clear-cut résumé of what any person's day consists?

That is somewhat the way I felt when I set out to outline what a day would be like as lived by the average citizen of Hunza. The only thing that I can hope to set out is a pattern. It may have a few or even hundreds of variations but at least the general pattern will be clear. So here is what I believe to be the procedure of one day—an ordinary day—in the life of a Hunzan.

The people of Hunza are Mohammedans of the Ismaili sect. They are in no way fanatical. In fact, the Ismaili are probably the least religious of all Mohammedans. The call to prayer is at 3:30 in the morning. Only the more pious and devout attend the service at the mosque.

A good true religious Mohammedan prays 5 times a day and on each occasion the prayer will last up to one hour, but through my entire travels through both Nagir and Hunza I saw very few instances where they took time off to pray during the day except on religious holidays or festivals. But, as I mentioned, prayer starts at 3:30 A.M. and I didn't have occasion to see them in action. Those who are devout usually pray from 3:30 to 4:30 and then go have their breakfast and so to the fields.

7:Tobe C,T-3 (1959)1960 AV7 Burusho AV7
Hunza

CHAPTER 48

Religion and Customs

THE PEOPLE of Hunza are Mohammedan. From all reports that I have been able to gather and from their own voluntary statements, I assume that religion with them is something that they don't go overboard about. As a matter of fact, Hunza is one of the few countries in all the world where there has never been any religious strife, nor does even the faintest glimmer of it exist there today.

In other words, they can take their religion or leave it alone!

Just how important a part this plays in the economy of the people is hard to estimate, but one thing is sure —religion does not make the demands upon their time that it does with many other people. In the East, where religion can be a mania or almost a complete absorption or way of life for many people, this can be of vital consequence.

7:Tobe C,T-3 (1959)1960 AV7 Burusho AV7
Hunza

643 Here I will quote from *The Autobiography of Sir*
771 *Mohomed Nazim Khan,* K.C.I.E. (Mir of Hunza from
798 1892-1938 and grandfather of the present Mir):
[127] "The people of Hunza were originally idolators and they became Shias when intermarriage with the ruling family of Baltistan was arranged and later, when my great grandfather Shah Salam Khan was on the throne, most of the country became Maulai. In Ganesh and Hinni, there are still a few Shias and two Sunnis. When I became Mir I declared to the people that they could adopt what religion they would, which annoyed my advisers who said that a country with many religions was bound to fall. I said that religion had nothing to do with ruling and have proved myself right in that there has been no religious strife in the country since that time."

788 Maybe the Hunzan farmer mumbles his prayers while he is working, but he seemingly doesn't appear to stop from his efforts on behalf of his farm.

000 From my actual experiences in seeing and viewing religions throughout the world, I am of the opinion that, where religion demands too much of a man's time, his industry suffers and this affects his standard of living. It is a possibility that pious, religious people throughout the world will take exception to this but, nevertheless, I am stating this as my own opinion, based on my findings and observations, and that's all it is. If anyone wants to debate the point with me, I'd be happy to provide the time and the opportunity.

The Hunzans are not fanatics and therefore they can devote more time to their labors than those who spend their time praying and resting, because of religious holidays and observances.

852 Being Mohammedans, circumcision is practiced on
304 all male children. Normally this operation is performed

1: Leitner L-3 (1866-68) 18637 AVS Dard
Burusho AV7

loss of their independence,—I venture to point out the impolicy and injustice of interfering with these principalities.

I have already referred to a letter from the venerable chief of Nagyr, in which he strongly commends to my care one of his sons, Raja Habibulla, as a well-wisher of the English Government. Indeed, he has absolutely done nothing to justify any attack on the integrity of his country; and before we invade it other means to secure peace should be tried. I have no doubt that I, for one, could induce him to comply with everything in reason, if reason, and not an excuse for taking his country, is desired. Nagyr has never joined Hunza in kidnapping expeditions, as is alleged in the above-quoted paragraph. Indeed, slavery is an abomination to the pious and peaceful agriculturist of that interesting country. The Nagyris are musical and were fond of dances, polo, ibex *battue*-hunting, archery and shooting from horseback, and other manly exercises; but the growing piety of the race has latterly proscribed music and dancing. The accompanying drawing of a Nagyri dance in the neighbouring Gilgit gives a good idea of similar performances at Nagyr.

The country is full of legendary lore, but less so than Hunza, where Grimm's fairy tales appear to be translated into actual life. No war is undertaken except at the supposed command of an unseen fairy, whose drum is on such occasions sounded in the mountains. Ecstatic women, inhaling the smoke of a cedar-branch, announce the future, tell the past, and describe the state of things in neighbouring valleys. They are thus alike the prophets, the historians, and the journalists of the tribe. They probably now tell their indignant hearers how, under the pretext of shooting or of commerce, Europeans have visited their country, which they now threaten to destroy with strange and murderous weapons; but Hunza is "ayeshó," or "heaven-born," and the fairies, if not the inaccessible nature of the country, will continue to protect it.

The folly of invading Hunza and Nagyr is even greater

It Leitner L-3 (1866-93) 1893? AV3 Dard
Burusho AV7

than the physical obstacles to which I have already referred. Here, between the Russian and the British spheres of influence in Central Asia, we have not only the series of Pamirs, or plateaux and high valleys, which I first brought to notice on linguistic grounds, in the map accompanying my tour in Dardistan in 1866 (the country between Kashmir and Kabul), and which have been recently confirmed topographically; but we have also a large series of mountainous countries, which, if left alone, or only assured of our help against a foreign invader, would guarantee for ever the peace alike of the Russian, the British, and the Chinese frontiers. Unfortunately, we have allowed Afghanistan to annex Badakhshan, Raushan, Shignan, and Wakhan, at much loss of life to their inhabitants; and Russia has similarly endorsed the shadowy and recent claims of Bokhara on neighbouring provinces, like Darwáz and Karategin.

It is untrue that Hunza and Nagyr were ever tributaries of Kashmír, except in the sense that they occasionally sent a handful of gold dust to its Maharaja, and received substantial presents in return. It is to China or Kitái that Hunza considers itself bound by an ancient, but vague, allegiance. Hunza and Nagyr, that will only unite against a foreign common foe, have more than once punished Kashmír when attempting invasion; but they are not hostile to Kashmír, and Nagyr even sends one of the princes to Srinagar as a guarantee of its peaceful intentions. At the same time, it is not very many months ago that they gave us trouble at Chalt, when we sought to establish an outpost, threatening the road to Hunza and the independence alike of Hunza and Nagyr.

Just as Nagyr is pious, so Hunza is impious. Its religion is a perversion even of the heterodox Mulái faith, which is Shiah Muhammadan only in name, but pantheistic in substance. It prevails in Punyál, Zebak, Darwáz, etc. The Tham, or Raja, of Hunza used to dance in a Mosque and hold revels in it. Wine is largely drunk in Hunza, and like the Druses of the Lebanon, the "initiated" Mulái's

Burusho AV7

77/ may consider nothing a crime that is not found out. Indeed, an interesting connection can be established between the doctrines of the so-called "Assassins" of the Crusaders, which have been handed down to the Druses, and those of the Muláis in various parts of the Hindukush. Their spiritual chief gave me a few pages of their hitherto mysterious Bible, the "Kelám-i-Pir," in 1886, which I have translated, and shortly intend to publish. All I can now say is, that, whatever the theory of their faith, the practice depends, as elsewhere, on circumstances and the character of the race.

000 The language of Hunza and Nagyr solves many philological puzzles. It is a prehistoric remnant, in which a series of simple consonantal or vowel sounds stands for various groups of ideas, relationships, etc. It establishes the great fact, that customs and the historical and other associations of a race are the basis of the so-called rules of grammar. The cradle, therefore, of human thought as expressed in language, whether of the Aryan, the Turanian, or the Shemitic groups, is to be found in the speech of Hunza-Nagyr; and to destroy this by foreign intervention, which has already brought new diseases into the Hindukush, as also a general linguistic deterioration, would be a greater act of barbarism than to permit the continuance of Hunza raiding on the Yarkand road. Besides, that raiding can be stopped again, by closing the slave-markets of Badakhshan, Bokhara, and Yarkand, or by paying a subsidy, say of £1,000 per annum, to the Hunza chief.

Indeed, as has already been pointed out, the recrudescence of kidnapping is largely due to the state of insecurity and confusion caused by our desire to render the Afghan and the Chinese frontiers conterminous with our own, in the vain belief that the outposts of three large and distant kingdoms, acting in concert, will keep Russia more effectively out of India than a number of small independent republics or principalities. Afghanistan may now be big, but every so-called subject in her outlying districts is her

1: Leitner L-3 (1866-93) 1893? AV3 Dard
Burusho AV7

000 republic of eleven houses—a region which contains the solution of numerous linguistic and ethnographical problems, the cradle of the Aryan race, inhabited by the most varied tribes, from which region I brought the first Hunza and the first Káfir that ever visited England, and of which region one of its bigger Chiefs, owing to my sympathy with the people, invested me with a kind of titular governorship. In that comparatively small area the questions that are to be solved are great, and it is even now in some parts, perhaps, as hazardous a journey as, say, through the dark continent. Whether you get to the ancient Robber's Seat of Hunza, where the right of plundering is hereditary, or into the recesses of Kafiristan or the fastnesses of Pakhtu settlers; whether you proceed to the republics of Darel, Tangir or Chilás, or proceed to the community where women are sometimes at the head of affairs, and which is neither worse nor better than others, an amount of information, especially ethnographic, is within one's reach which makes Dardistan a region that would reward a number of explorers. I may say, in my own instance, if my life is spared for ten years longer, all I could do would be to bring out the mere material in my possession in a rough form, leaving the theories thereon to be elaborated by others. My difficulties were great, but my reward has been in a mass of material, for the elaboration of which International, Oriental, and other Congresses and learned societies have petitioned Government since 1866. My official duties have hitherto prevented my addressing myself to the congenial task of elaborating the material in conjunction with others. In 1886, I was, however, put for a few months on special duty in connexion with the Hunza language, at the very time that Colonel Lockhart was traversing a portion of Dardistan. But I think you will be more interested if, beyond personal observations, I tell you something about that little country of Hunza itself, which in many respects differs from those surrounding it, not only in regard to its peculiar language, which I have mentioned, but in other respects also. Unfortunately, it is also unlike the surrounding districts, in being characterised by customs the absence of some of which would be desirable. The Hunzas are nominal Muhammedans, and they use their mosques for drinking and dancing assemblies. Women are as free as air. There is little restriction in the relation

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1: Leitner L-3 (1866-93) 1893? AV3 Dard

of the sexes, and the management of the State, in theory, is attributed to fairies. No war is undertaken unless the fairy (whom, by the way, one is not allowed to see) gives the command by beating the sacred drum. The witches, who get into an ecstatic state, are the journalists, historians, and prophetesses of the tribe. They tell you what goes on in the surrounding valleys. They represent, as it were, the local *Times*; they tell you the past glories, such as they are, of raids and murders by t' .r tribe; and when the *Thum* or ruler, who is supposed to be heaven-born (there being some mystery about the origin of his dynasty), does wrong, the only one who will dare to tell him the truth is the Dayal, or the witch who prophesies the future, and takes the opportunity of telling the Rajah that, unless he behaves in a manner worthy of his origin, he will come to grief! This is not a common form of popular representation to be met with, say, in India. Grim 's fairy-tales sometimes seem to be translated into practice in Hunza-land, which offers material for discussion alike to those who search for the Huns and to those who search for the very different Honas.

Then with regard to religion, as I said before, though nominally Muhammedan, they are really deniers of all the important precepts of true Muhammedanism, which is opposed to drunkenness, introduces a real brotherhood, and enjoins great cleanliness as absolutely necessary before the spiritual purification by prayer can take place. The people are mostly Muláis, but inferior in piety (?) to those of Zébak, Shignán, Wakhan, and other places. Now, what is that sect? It is represented by His Highness Prince Aga Khan, of Bombay, a person who is not half aware of his importance in those regions, where, till very recently, men were murdered as soon as looked at. One who acknowledges him or has brought some of the water with which he has washed his feet, would always be able to pass through those regions perfectly unharmed! I found my disguise as a Bokhara Mullah in 1866 to be quite useless, as a protection at Gilgit, whence men were kidnapped to be exchanged for a good hunting dog, but in Hunza they used to fill prisoners with gunpowder, and blow them up for general amusement. His Highness, who is much given to horse-racing, confines his spiritual administration to the collection of taxes throughout Central Asia from his followers or

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covered with orchards of fruit trees. The cultivation is extremely good, and fruit of all kinds grows in abundance.

Mahommedanism sits but loosely on the Hunza people, who make no secret of their preference for easy-going tenets. Though professing to be Maulais, they are disowned by their own Pirs, who refuse to visit the country, and no contributions are sent by them to their spiritual chief. They are great wine-drinkers, and are reproached by their neighbours for their readiness to eat unorthodox food,[1] and for the immorality of their women. Firearms are scarce, and bows and arrows are still not quite obsolete.

The people of Hunza and Nager belong to the caste called Yeshkun by the Shins, but amongst themselves known as Boorish. They differ slightly in appearance, the Nager people apparently showing an infusion of Tartar blood, derived, no doubt, from their Ishardo neighbours. The Hunza people, who are a somewhat taller race, have finer features and are distinguished for being more deliberate and less vivacious in their actions. The language, called Boorishki or Boorishaski, is identical in both states; the Hunza pronunciation being rather more broad and drawling than that of Nager. This language was first published by Dr. Leitner. All their songs, however, are in Shina,—a language which is supposed to lend itself more readily to poetry,—and Shina songs are sung by men who do not understand a word of that language.

Both Thums are still addressed as Soori, as a title of respect. This appears to be the same as *Sri*, an appellation of Lakshmi, the Hindoo goddess of wealth, commonly prefixed to the names of Hindoo princes in India, to denote their honour and prosperity. The Thum's wives are styled "*gánish*," which is almost identical with the original Sanscrit word for mother, and their sons are called "*gushpoor*." In cutting the throat of an animal for food, the people of Hunza make a practice of turning it towards the Thum's abode, even when many miles distant, instead of in the orthodox direction of Mecca.

Every village, according to its size, possesses one or more forts, sufficient to give shelter to the whole population. These are built of sun-dried bricks, with walls 15 feet high, and square towers at intervals of 20 yards. At night the whole population takes refuge within the walls. Similar forts exist in Gilgit, but under Cashmere rule they have fallen into disuse.

In Hunza there is a tradition preserved of the occurrence

[1] Animals not slaughtered according to the manner prescribed by Mahommedan law.

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CHAPTER VII.

HABITS AND CUSTOMS.

D 178 771 NOTWITHSTANDING original tribal differences, the Shin rule in Gilgit and the surrounding valleys practically welded both conquerors and conquered into one people, distinguished only by caste divisions; and, though Mahommedanism has in some instances modified and in others abolished old customs, many of great interest still remain. Many of these, though originating in religious rites and beliefs, have now lost all connection with them in the minds of those who still practise them. It is difficult, almost impossible, now to distinguish between those which were introduced by the Shins, and those which were adopted by them from the original inhabitants; but fairly correct conjectures concerning the origin of some of them may be formed. Hunza is the B [178] country least affected by external influences, and in which the [771] laxest form of Mahommedanism now exists, but there is scarcely any custom or observance maintained there which has not its counterpart still existing, or which till lately existed in the neighbouring valleys. In Chitral and some of the valleys to the westward, many customs seem to have partly disappeared. This may, not improbably, be due to the inhabitants having been earlier converts to Islam, or more exposed to external influences. In the valleys to the southward, like Chilas and Darel, the want of a single ruler and the stricter tenets of Soonnee Mahommedanism have contributed to cause many old customs and festivals to fall into disuse. In spite, however, of local differences, enough remains to show that a strong bond of kinship exists between all the Dard and Ghalchah tribes.

D 142 147 In appearance the men are light, active figures, averaging from 5 feet 5 inches to 5 feet 8 inches in height. Though well made, they are not, as a rule, remarkable for muscular development, presenting in this respect a marked contrast to the Tartar races. Notwithstanding their hardy, simple lives, they seem unequal to any prolonged physical effort. In travelling and shooting I have constantly found them knock up before

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which would point to polygamy, and not to communal marriage, as an ancient institution in the Chitral Valley. In the Bushkarik language the terms point towards polyandry.

Cases of infidelity are extremely common, and the men show none of the jealousy of their wives usual in older Mahommedan communities. In cases of adultery the injured husband has the right to slay the guilty couple when he finds them together; but should he slay one and not the other, he is held guilty of murder. This practice is followed in Sirikol and Wakhan as well as south of the Hindoo Koosh. It is said that the Afghans of Swat, Dir, and Asmar take no notice of a wife's infidelity if, when it comes to their knowledge, they are able to disguise the knowledge from others; but should they learn it through a third person, a bloody vengeance is inflicted. In cases where conclusive proof is wanting, and which are brought for settlement before the ruler or Wuzeer, guarantee is taken for the future by the accused placing his lips to the woman's breast. She thenceforth is regarded as his foster-mother, and no other relations but those of mother and son can exist between them. So sacred is the tie thus established esteemed, that it has never been known to be broken, and the most jealous husband ceases to suspect even though a confession of previous guilt may have been made. In such a case a sheep and a toloo of gold are placed at the feet of the husband by the offender, who humbly sues for forgiveness.

It would appear that morals were more lax formerly than they are now. In Hunza, where the community approaches most nearly to its pre-Mahommedan state, infidelity is not regarded as an offence, and custom requires that a man shall place his wife at his guest's disposal, as in Hazara. The *droit de seigneur* was exercised by the father of the present ruler, and though the custom has been allowed to fall into disuse, it is evident from the accounts given of weekly orgies held by Ghazan Khan that the right is only held in abeyance and not formally renounced. In Nager things are but slightly better, and a man considers himself highly honoured if his wife attracts the attention of the Thum. Islam has not yet brought about the seclusion of the women, who mix freely with the men on all occasions Young men and maidens of different families eat and converse together without restraint, and great liberty is allowed to young women, with frequent evil results. Infanticide arising from illicit connections is common, and is not considered a crime.

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D 771/174 778 fication. It plays a conspicuous part in the incantations of the Dainyals, and on a great man entering a Shin village a pan of burning Chili branches is waved before him. On certain occasions both men and women saturate themselves with the smoke, which is of a particularly pungent nature.

D 171 B 171 178 The custom of Chili worship does not appear to have penetrated to Hunza or Nager, nor is any trace of it to be found in the Oxus Valley, in Chitral, or among the tribes of the Swat Valley; but among the Siah-Posh it seems to exist in almost the same form as it did among the Shins. Chili wood, or Padam, is still taken down to the Punjab to be used in Hindoo ceremonials. According to Colonel Prejevalski, the same tree is also held sacred by the Mongols and Tangutans, who burn the branches for incense during prayer time. At Hemis Shukpa, within 20 miles of Leh, a few trees of great age exist, and are held in much veneration by the Tartars of the village, though the tree is not generally an object of Tartar respect.[1] It may be that the feeling of veneration was imbibed from the Shins, whose influence must have extended nearly to Leh. It is still usual in Gilgit to sprinkle goat's blood on a tree of any kind before cutting it down.

D 771/171 B 771/171 The religion of the whole country is now some form of Mahommedanism, and in the immense knot of mountains of which Yassin forms the centre, three different types of the same religion have met, and are now striving for the mastery. From the south, Soonnee Moollahs have carried their tenets up the different valleys with more or less success. From the eastward a current of Shiah doctrines has set in from Iskardo; and from the westward the curious Maulai, or Muglee,[2] tenets have found their way up the Oxus Valley. It is to be noticed that the subversion of Hindooism by Mahommedanism in the remoter valleys seems to have been extremely gradual, and to have been more owing to gradual conversion than to persecution.

D 771/173 B 771/173 The genealogical tables of the present ruling families of Hunza, Nager, and Gilgit, enable a fair idea to be formed of the date of the introduction of Islam into the country. Tradition records the death of the Gilgit Ra with the non-Mussulman name of Shiri Buddutt,[3] at the hands of a stranger bearing the Mussulman name of Azru, or Azor, from whom the present Ra of Gilgit, and the Thums of Hunza and Nager, trace

[1] Henderson's *Lahore to Yarkund*, page 51.
[2] The common uneducated pronunciation.
[3] The meaning of the name is perhaps "Given by Sri Buddha."—*Sri Buddha Datta*.

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their descent. Allowing twenty-five years for each generation, this would place the first appearance of Mahommedanism in Gilgit at about the end of the thirteenth, or the beginning of the fourteenth century—a time when that faith had already spread over the more accessible parts of Central Asia. It is to be noted that this exactly corresponds with the time when Islam was first introduced into Cashmere, which, according to Ferishta, happened between A. D. 1315 and 1326. General Cunningham, by computing thirty years for each generation, and fifteen for the reign of each ruler, places the introduction of Mahommedanism into Khapolor about a century later.[1] According to one tradition Azor came from Iskardo, and in the genealogy of the Makpon princes, a Mahommedan adventurer is shown to have established himself in that place at exactly the same time, if the same computation be allowed for the duration of a generation.

It is not, however, probable that the usurper would have been in a position to attempt the forcible conversion of his new subjects; and it may be presumed that, for a long period, his descendants contented themselves with practising their own faith, with, no doubt, greatly relaxed stringency, without interfering with that of their subjects. It is not till eight generations of rulers later, which would represent a period of two centuries, that we meet with a Mussulman Thum in the neighbouring state of Nager. There was, probably, a fresh impulse given to Mahommedanism about the end of the sixteenth century, for it was at about that period that a Persian adventurer, the founder of the present ruling families of Chitral and Yassin, established himself in Kashkar. The names of those whose kingdom he usurped are lost, the only record being that they were of the Shahreis family, which is the name by which the Gilgit rulers previous to the time of Azor were known, and which was retained by the descendants of the usurper for four generations. The Emperor Baber, writing in the early part of the sixteenth century, speaks of Chitral as forming part of Kafiristan, "in the hill-country to the north-east lies Kafiristan, such as Kattor and Gebrek."[2] But on several occasions he distinguishes this Kafiristan from Kafiristan Pich (which is still a Kafir country), as if some difference existed between the two. It is probable, therefore, that though the faith of Islam was introduced into the country mentioned about the beginning of the fourteenth century, it was long confined to

[1] Cunningham's Ladakh.
[2] Erskine's Memoirs of Baber, page 140.

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a limited number of the inhabitants, and did not become general till the middle or end of the sixteenth century. Even then its acceptance was so irregular that it is not surprising that Hindooism has lingered on, and has only become extinct in the present day.

The tribes of the Indus Valley were exposed earlier to the fervid preaching of the Moollahs of Swat and Boneyr, and this has led to the adoption by them of the Soonnee tenets. The people of Chilas, who were always a less tractable race than their neighbours, make it their boast that, though travellers and traders are safe in their country, no Shiah ever escapes out of their hands. At Gor, also, a few miles above Chilas, the people are all Soonnees, but a looser type of Mahommedanism prevails, and prayers were till recently addressed to the god Taiban, whose horse is sculptured on the rock near the village.

In Gilgit the population is now three-fourths Soonnee and the rest Shiah, but at the commencement of the Sikh occupation, the greater proportion were Shiahs or Maulais, and it is related that any Soonnee falling into their hands was branded with a hot iron unless he consented to become a proselyte. Those who now still adhere to the Maulai tenets, are mostly old men, who keep the fact concealed as far as possible, and call themselves Shiahs. At Soomma, a secluded village in Yassin, the people, though professed Mussulmans, still make offerings to the god Shaitum. In several other places the names of local deities are still preserved, and objects, such as a peculiar-shaped rock near a village, are still regarded with veneration, and invoked in the registration of solemn covenants.

The influence of the Iskardo Princes introduced Shiah tenets into the north-eastern part of Dardistan, while the tenets of the Maulais have made their way from the Oxus Valley across the passes of the Hindoo Koosh. In Nager the entire population are Shiahs of the orthodox type, and so are two-thirds of the people of Baltistan; the rest belong to the Noor Buksh sect. In Hunza, till a few years ago, Shiah tenets found many followers; now the Meer and the whole population are Maulais.

The Shiahs in these countries lament the martyrdom of the sons of Ali twice a year; once at the usual time according to the Mahommedan calendar, and again in the month of August, the season at which they say the martyrdom actually occurred.